

Central Spine

Newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society



CENTRALARIZONACACTUS.ORG



CENTRALARIZONACACTUS

December 2022



Happy Holidays! Be sure to get out in our beautiful Sonoran Desert to visit plants we love in their home environment. Photo by Sue Hakala.

CACSS HOLIDAY PARTY By Chair Sue Glenn

December 11 at 11 a.m.
At Papago Park Ramadas 9 and 10
Come out and enjoy a great day in the park.

All members and guests are allowed. Bring your own picnic. We will have a charcoal grill for those that wish to BBQ. Beer and wine are allowed, but not in glass bottles.

The new Board and Honorary Lifetime Members will be announced. A plant raffle/exchange will be conducted by Jo Davis. Please make sure to check in with her to receive a ticket. Jo will let you know when the raffle will begin.

We will be playing several games including Holiday Family Feud and a new bingo trivia game with gift card prizes.

No RSVP needed. If you have questions, please call 920-327-3137.

OCTOBER MEGAAUCTION By Chair Cris Ginkel

Thank you to all of you who made our October Mega Live and Silent Auction a great success! The donors, volunteers and bidders continue to amaze me year after year. Your donations, support, help, and generous bidding led to one of our highest auction totals ever. A total of \$7,131 was brought into our society from this event. A big thank you also goes to the Desert Botanical Garden for providing the time and space for this annual CACSS fundraiser.

These types of auctions are one of the most important fundraisers for our society. With these funds we can continue with our purpose, which is to study, propagate and cultivate cactus and succulents, educate members and the public, aid conservation programs, and support the Desert Botanical Garden and similar institutions. We hope it was a fun gathering for all. We look forward to seeing all of you at future CACSS events.

To all of you, on behalf of the CACSS, thank you so much for your efforts in making this event a truly enjoyable and successful one. It's hard to come up with adequate words to describe how much your support means.

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO 2022 *CENTRAL SPINE* CONTRIBUTORS

By Editor Sue Hakala

A big CACSS thank you to the dedicated writers and photographers who have produced exceptional articles, fabulous photographs, timely ideas, and so much more for our newsletter in 2022.

Say a really enormous thank you to all authors and encourage them to write more: Chris Ginkel, Cricket Peterson, Kenton Seth, Tamara Salvatierra, Tom Glavich, Diana Rogers, Virginia F. Martin, Nancy Mumpton, Tristan Davis, David Hemming, Cliff Fielding, Scott McMahon, Nick Diomede, Wayne MacDonald, Rob Romero, Mary Osmond Jeulfs, Kim Andrews, Ken Schutz, Sue Hakala, Tom Briggs, Eric Lundberg, Michelle Schrade, Tom Gatz, Steve Brack, Elaine Hu, Wendy Barrett, Rich Zeh, Guillermo Rivera, Lee Brownson, Denise Smith, Elton Roberts, Sue Tyrrel, Mike Gallagher, Ken Luiten, Diana Hiser, Rita Gosnell, Beth Kirkpatrick, and Rick Rosenberg.

Thank you to Nick Diomede who serves as the newsletter technical advisor. Nick has a computer program that tweaks every photo in the newsletter to make each look its best. Thanks must also be given to the multitude of photographers, too numerous to mention, who have contributed photos that make each issue lively and entertaining. We wouldn't look so good without you.

Nancy Mumpton, proofreader extraordinaire, plus our other anonymous proofreader and I endeavor to produce a product free of errors. Thank you to all for help with this arduous task.

In 2022, Elaine Hu planned monthly programs. She is responsible for getting all monthly program articles and photos from the presenters, then submitting everything to the newsletter.

Michelle Schrade reports monthly on the CACSS Facebook page and has the lucky job of choosing the featured photos. She did an outstanding job this year.

The Education Group (on hold since COVID) has suggested that every newsletter have a beginner's corner with seasonal articles of interest. As editor, I've taken on that task.

If you have an idea for an article, regular feature, comments, praise, thank you, suggestions, etc., please submit to CACSScentralspine@gmail.com. It will help to make our newsletter great! As you can see, it's indeed a club effort!



Members who helped Gard Roper with his plant sale. From left, Scott McMahon, Lee Brownson, Wendy Barrett, Jo Davis and Tom Briggs.



Gard and Jo Davis discussing the sale, and right, a small section of Gard's beautiful yard which he is discussing with Donald Oesterie.

CACSS OUT-OF-STATE TRIP FOR SUMMER 2023 By Joan McDonnell

A survey was sent to all members in mid-November with three choices for an out-of-state trip for Summer 2023. Thank you to all who responded to help us organize a venue that best meets the members' interests. A graph of the results is shown below.

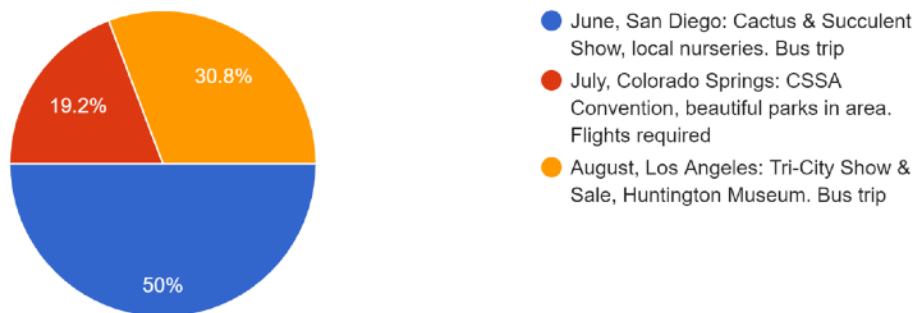
The winning choice is a trip to San Diego for the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Show and Sale the first weekend in June 2023. Mike Gallagher had been looking at such a trip before everything was shut down due to COVID. This will be a bus trip to attend the show in Balboa Park with visits to local nurseries. We will provide more information as we work out the details, or you can contact Joan or Mike with any questions or suggestions.

Joan Mc Donnell cell 480-246-7128, jmcdonn1@gmail.com

Mike Gallagher cell 602-882-8630, mgallagher26@cox.net

Select one of the following venues.

52 responses



Publication of material in the *Central Spine* does not imply agreement with the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of the CACSS, nor does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material by the CACSS, or the *Central Spine*, regardless of any position or office held by the author. All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of the author.

ARIZONA CACTUS SALES HAS MOVED By Tom Gatz Photos by Chris Ginkel

After 40 years in the same location, Arizona Cactus Sales has moved, but not very far. You have long known them to be located at 1619 S. Arizona Ave. Chandler, AZ 85286. The new address is 1623 S. Arizona Ave. Chandler, AZ 85286.

The new nursery will not be visible from Arizona Avenue. It is located directly in back of the old location, a tenth of a mile east of Arizona Avenue along the dirt access road. Jim and Electra Elliot are retiring from running the business, and a very familiar face has taken over.



Longtime manager Ty Petersen (above) now owns the nursery. Display gardens featuring rare and unusual plants have been set up. You can expect the same great quality plants and service that Jim and Electra have long provided. Stop on by and say hello to Ty and his staff. Be sure to let your friends know that this great nursery is still around.



Left, Ty Peterson, new owner of Arizona Cactus Sales, rings up his first customer club member Tom Briggs.

Below, just a small selection of the gorgeous plants that are available for purchase.

Open 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily, closed Sunday.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE By Cricket Peterson

Congratulations to this year's Honorary Lifetime Member inductees: Beth Kirkpatrick, Mike Gallagher and Sue Hakala. It's well deserved.

That was a great Mega Auction in October. Wow! Thanks to everyone who helped make it a huge success.

Remember to please wear your CACSS name tags when attending meetings and other events as it makes it easier to put a face with a name. If you need a name tag, please contact Beth Kirkpatrick, membership chair.

It's going to be 2023 soon. That means it's time to pay your CACSS dues, which you can do at a meeting or through PayPal.

Hope you can attend the CACSS holiday party at Papago Park on December 11, starting at 11 a.m. A field trip to Boyce Thompson Arboretum is planned on January 14, 2023. The first regular meeting of the year will be January 29, 2023, held at the DBG in Dorrance Hall at 2 p.m.

I encourage members to have open gardens and cactus sales, but please be mindful of other CACSS events when you schedule yours. Please look at the CACSS calendar so as not have a scheduling conflict that draws away from the CACSS event and yours.

Hoping all have a joyful holiday season and a great New Year!

CACSS REGULAR MEETINGS FOR 2023

All meetings at the Desert Botanical Garden Dorrance Hall are at 2 p.m.

- January 14, field trip to Boyce Thompson
- January 29, Dorrance Hall
- February 19, Dorrance Hall
- March 28 - April 2, Annual Show and Sale DBG
- April 30, Dorrance Hall
- May 21, Dorrance Hall
- June 11, Dorrance Hall
- July 30, Dorrance Hall
- August 27, Dorrance Hall
- September 24, Dorrance Hall
- October 15, Mega Auction Dorrance Hall
- November 19, Dorrance Hall
- December Holiday Party, TBD

WELCOME NOEMI HERNANDEZ CASTRO, THE NEW CACTUS SPECIALIST
AT THE DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN Photo and text by Tom Gatz



Say hello to Noemí Hernández Castro, the new cactus specialist at the Desert Botanical Garden.

I recently asked Noemí (pronounced “No-em-ee”) to tell us a little bit about herself and her background with cactus and other succulents. Her experience is impressive, and her enthusiasm for her new position is very apparent. Here is my interview with her.

1. What first sparked your interest in growing cactus and other succulents?

During my college student time, I lived in one of the largest cities in the world, Mexico City. One of my major concerns for people living in the city was the limited open green spaces available. In a concrete jungle, it is hard to find horizontal space, so green walls and green roofs caught my attention. Most of the species used there were succulents, mainly from the crassulaceae, asparagaceae and some from the

cactaceae family; all with low water consumption. Perfect for a city with high water demands and restrictions.

As a student, I started working with green roof maintenance and plant propagation. One thing led to another and I ended up working at the National Botanical Garden in Mexico City with the cacti and succulent collection after I graduated. To me it was just seeing these plants and falling in love with them, their shapes, colors and unique adaptations.

2. Do you remember your first cactus or other succulent plant?

Growing up, my mom had dozens of succulent plants in her house, and I would help her take care of them, some epiphytic cactus, Mexican fence cactus, mammillarias, aloes, graptopetalum, haworthias, the popular *Portulacaria afra*, etc. However, I started my personal collection with echeveria species and cultivars. As for cactus, in the beginning, I was drawn to astrophytum species and their variability and plasticity.

3. Do you have a favorite family or genus of cactus or other succulents?

I would not say so. It is tricky because, with time, you develop knowledge and interest in groups you may be working with, have seen out in the wild, or have lived around them. Just like now, being so close to saguaros all the time makes me really appreciate them, same for organ pipes and cardons.

4. Please tell us a little bit about your education and experience in growing cactus and other succulents; tell us more about the varieties that you helped hybridize and register.

I got my bachelor's degree in biology from the Metropolitan Autonomous University UAM-X, in Mexico City.

My main job as a horticulturist was to work at the National Botanical Garden in Mexico City, in UNAM. I was there for six magnificent years and being able to work with the national collections of cactaceae and crassulaceae was very instructive. My main tasks with the collection were watering, IPM and maintenance, and I enjoyed every day of it.

Besides helping take care of the collections there, I worked in the propagation area. We grew cacti and succulents from seed and through cuttings or offsets. Some of these plants were sold to other nurseries, but the main purpose was for the plants to enter the adoption program, an initiative of the garden to have visitors adopt a plant and take care of it. We would hand them an adoption certificate with all the information for their plant and offer workshops to help them produce seed, repotting, IPM, etc.

At the botanical garden in Mexico City, we started to hybridize crassulaceae species and selected varieties with unique characteristics to cultivate. As part of a project, we registered five echeveria hybrids to the Mexican government and to the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV). The university now holds the rights for propagation of those five hybrids.

After that, I spent a year at Longwood Gardens in PA, where I did a fellowship focused on leadership in horticulture, immersing myself in one of the greatest gardens in the world.

I have just started my position as the cactus specialist for the Desert Botanical Garden, and I am looking forward to all the possible ways to enhance the cactus collection.

5. Do you have a favorite potting mix recipe that you can share with our club members?

I do. It is 50% organic compounds and 50% draining material. For the organic part, I like to use $\frac{1}{4}$ worm castings and $\frac{1}{4}$ black soil, and for the draining material, I use $\frac{1}{4}$ pumice and $\frac{1}{4}$ lava rocks. I add bigger pumice to the bottom of the pot to aid drainage and to retain the soil.

Of course, certain species have special soil requirements that involve adding sand, gypsum, coir, or coconut fiber.

6. Do you have any advice for our newer club members who are just getting started in the hobby of growing cactus and other succulents?

A very important part for cacti and succulent enthusiasts is conservation, given that many species are on the Red List of Threatened Species for the International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN. Plant poaching is a major problem for wild populations of cacti, threatening the genetic pool, population dynamics and the entire existence of the species.

These are slow-growing plants and it can be tedious to grow them. It requires patience and dedication. Therefore, my advice is to be very careful of where you are getting your plants from, and do not support sources that sell plants collected from the wild with no legal permits.

Noemi said that she is really looking forward to attending some of our club meetings in the near future.

10/10 TEMPERATURE GUIDELINE By Tom Gatz

This article first appeared in the January 2003 issue of the *Central Spine*. Still excellent advice.

To decide if you need to cover your tender plants to protect them from possible freezing temperatures, look at your outside thermometer at 10 p.m. You can expect the temperature in your yard to drop approximately an additional 10 degrees by dawn on a typical clear winter night with no wind (even less on cloudy and/or windy nights). So, with a 10 p.m. temperature of 43F or higher, it is usually safe not to cover your plants. The only time it might exceed this is if a cold front is forecast to pass through after 10 p.m. I've tested the "10/10 rule" for the past two years, and so far, it has worked for me!

NEED MORE WINTER HELP? By Editor Sue Hakala

Below are articles that have appeared in the *Central Spine* on winter care. **You can now just click on the article you want to read, then click on "Open Link" and it will take you directly to the newsletter that has the article in it.** This new feature is being done on ALL the articles you are going to want to read that are currently in the club Indexes. A group of members has been working the past few months to make this happen, and we are nearly done! More on that later.

- [10/10 Temperature Guide](#) (when to cover plants) by Tom Gatz, 1/03, page 3
- [Altering Microclimates During Winter](#) by Kim Andrews, 3/20, page 10
- [Altering Microclimates During Winter](#) by Kim Andrews, 1/21, page 7
- [Breaking Dormancy](#) by Kim Andrews, 4/20, page 6
- [Cacti and Succulents in Cold Weather](#) by Russ Hintz, 12/00, page 3
- [Crash Course on Winter-Growing Bulbs](#) by Celeste Gornick, 10/08, page 5
- [Frost Damage 2004](#) by Jim Elliott, 3/04, page 2
- [Frost Protection](#) found within Leo Martin's *From Your President* column, 1/99, page 1
- [Growing in the Desert Series: Coping with Wet Winters](#) by Mark Dimmitt, 1/12, page 4
- [Gymnocalycium Habitat and Winter Culture](#) by Mike Goodson, 8/85, page 4
- [Holiday Cactus](#) by Leo Martin, 12/02, page 9
- [Insects in Winter](#) by Sue Hakala, 1/20, page 21
- [Some Observations on Winter](#) by Joan Skirvin, 8/85, page 4
- [Turn of the Seasons](#) by Leo Martin, 9/02, page 2
- [Winter-growing Bulbs: Part II](#) by Celeste Gornick, 3/09, page 6
- [Winter Growing Plants](#) found within Leo Martin's *From Your President* column, 12/01, page 1
- [Winter Growing Mesembs Through the Year](#) by Leo Martin, 7/01, page 1
- [Winter Protection](#) by Leo Martin, 10/02, page 1
- [Winter Watering](#) found within Leo Martin's *From Your President* column, 2/01, page 1
- [Wintering Plants in Phoenix](#) by Leo Martin, 11/00, page 3
- [Winterizing Your Adeniums](#) by Tom Gatz, 11/14, page 10

TEPHROCACTUS ALEXANDERI Photos and text by Rich Zeh

Tephrocactus alexanderi, or *bola de Indio* in Spanish, is from the north-western provinces of Argentina. It grows at low altitude. I always like plants that originate from low altitudes. I have much better luck growing them here in Phoenix than any high altitude plants.



I purchased this plant about 15 years ago as just a couple of small heads. It's on a slightly raised mound that gets almost full sun, winter and summer. I don't water it at all in the winter, and it's just on a monthly watering schedule in the summer, unless it has rained. It's extremely tough and super easy to grow.

I've broken off a few heads in accidental hose incidents and the separated heads will re-root very easily. I've never read anything much on this plant, even the javelinas don't touch it.

2023 CACSS DUES ARE DUE By Membership Chair, Beth Kirkpatrick

If you have not paid your 2023 dues, you have until December 31, 2022 to keep your CACSS membership current.

You can print the membership form in this newsletter and surface mail it, or you can pay via PayPal or credit card on the club website by clicking: <https://centralarizonacactus.org/membership/>

If you are unsure if your dues are paid, Beth Kirkpatrick at centralarizonacactus@gmail.com will be able to check for you.

Form is on the next page.

TUCSON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY RESCUE PROGRAM

By 2022, the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society rescue crew has run over 658 rescues, saved over 130,530 plants and spent over \$290,720 purchasing tags from the state of Arizona. The rescue crew usually tallies 600-700 volunteers every year on its rolls. The current total TCSS membership remains steady at 1,800–2,000 members per year.

ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE

The Desert Botanical Garden has been holding an annual cactus show since 1947. Many future members of CACSS exhibited in these shows. In 1973, the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society was officially formed. They held their first Annual Show and Sale in 1988 hosted by the DBG. In 2023, the CACSS will be celebrating 50 years as a Society.

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New Renewal PayPal

Date: _____

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

For new and renewal membership, complete this form and make check payable to CACSS.

Mail to: CACSS, PO Box 63572, Phoenix, AZ 85082-3572.

Please take special care in ensuring all information is legible.

Name (1): _____ E-mail: _____

Name (2): _____ E-mail: _____

For renewing members, please check if all following information remains same.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone (Home): _____ (Cell): _____

Do not publish my information to the CACSS membership list. (Note: we do not share information.)

Areas of volunteer interest: _____

How did you hear about us: _____

Includes monthly full-color newsletter via e-mail.

Annual Membership Fee: Individual \$20 Family \$25

Multi-year renewal (x) Years _____ = Total Fees Submitted _____

Please share your ideas for speakers or how we can improve your club experience:

If you would like to speak to someone about your membership, please contact Beth Kirkpatrick, Membership Chair, at

centralarizonacactus@gmail.com

GROWING STAPELIADS OUTDOORS IN PHOENIX Photos and text by
Michelle Schrade

I was asked by a few members to share tips on *Stapelia* care. I am neither an expert nor a botanist. I am a hobbyist who enjoys growing this genus of plant and have had success growing them outdoors in Phoenix. I mostly grow *Stapelia* (*gigantea*, *hirsuta*, *asterias*, and *grandiflora*) and *Huernia* (*hislopii*, *hislopii* ssp. *robusta*, *zebrina*, *schneideriana*, *variegata*, *boleana*, *bayeri*, *guttata*, and *keniensis*) with a few *Orbea* to boot.



Stapelia gigantea growing in the ground.

Stapelia gigantea. It grows under an *Ebenopsis ebano* (Texas ebony) tree with morning sun and afternoon shade and does exceedingly well. It blooms better and grows more than when it was in a pot.

The great thing about growing *Stapelias* outdoors is you don't have to worry about mealy bugs, which are the scourge of greenhouse growers. I don't use pesticides and have never had a problem with mealy bugs in my collection. Die off is a normal part of growing *Stapelias*. It usually happens with the oldest part of your plant. Sometimes a piece yellows, withers and dies. When this happens, be sure to take a clean knife (I use an Exacto sterilized with alcohol) and cut the piece off so it doesn't spread. It's also

Many of my gardening friends think I'm crazy growing plants that have flowers that smell like rotted meat and pollinated by flies. I admit, the first time I realized the little white spots on the flower were maggots, it made my skin crawl. The big draw for me is the flowers. Their intricate markings and delicateness combined with variety of shapes and coloration is fascinating to me. I never tire of looking at them.

I grow my *Stapelias* outdoors in pots on a covered patio that faces east. This way, I can control the amount of light and heat/cold my plants receive by moving the plant stands. During growing season, which is spring, fall and early winter, my plants are at the edge of the patio to receive maximum sunlight. I move the plants back closer to the house during low temperatures. In the heat of summer, I use a shade umbrella as needed. Currently, the only *Stapeliad* I grow in the ground is

common for pieces of the plant to fall off when moving the pots. When this happens, I usually stick the piece in a pot I have specifically for this.

Growing *Stapelias* outdoors in pots is similar to growing cactus in pots. You need to observe each new species to see how much sun it can take, especially in summer. Some plants, like *Huernia zebrina* and *Stapelias*, can take more direct sunlight, although I would limit afternoon sun for most *Stapelias*. If I see a plant looking stressed, I move it to more shade. Sometimes this is as simple as moving it to the shade of a neighboring plant.



Huernia hislopilii ssp. *robusta*

Stapelias turn colors when stressed by sun and cold. Normally, they are different shades of green, except when stressed by heat or cold when they turn shades of purple.

My plants are mostly in clay pots. I water one to two times a week during growing season when the days are warm and nights are cool. During summer, I water once a week. I tend to let the plants dry out between watering during the extreme heat of summer. I fertilize my *Stapelias* with a 10-10-10 fertilizer every time I water during the growing season. This is the same dilute mixture I use on my cactus. To learn more

about this method of fertilization, read Eric Lundberg's excellent article *Feed Me!!!* in the November 2019 issue of the *Central Spine*. Since trying his method, my cactus and succulents have more blooms and increased growth.

The soil I use is the same mixture I use for my cactus and succulents: 50% Organic Kellogg Palm, Cactus and Citrus potting soil and 50% pumice I get from the club pumice pile. Most of my pots are fairly deep. I haven't had a problem with rot since I use a fast draining soil mixture and a water meter. Be sure not to overwater during the hottest part of the summer. I use a top dressing of gravel around, an inch thick, to keep the pumice in place and anchor the plant.

Propagation of *Stapeliads* is fairly simple. Most grow quickly and need to be re-potted every few years. At this point, you can thin the plant and repot the rooted pieces or twist a part of the plant off at a joint. I usually let the plant callous over drying for a few days, and then put it in my regular potting soil mix. You can lay the piece on top of your potting soil and press down so it is anchored in the medium, or stick in an upright



Left *Orbea variegata*, right, *Huernia bayeri*.

position, depending on its shape. I water the plant like I normally would, depending on the season. I mostly do propagation during the growing season, in spring or fall. You can also grow very easily from seed.

If you have a greenhouse and would like to grow *Stapeliads*, I encourage you to look in the indices of *The Central Spine*. There are several articles by Leo A. Martin that are quite informative. He has grown *Stapeliads* in greenhouses for years and his articles contain information about the challenges of mealy bugs.

BIOGRAPHIES FOR THE 2023 CACSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

By Nick Diomede

President - Cricket Peterson



Cricket has served as the president of CACSS for the past two years and previously served on the board as a member-at-large. She is married to Don and has a daughter Alexis. Cricket has lived in Arizona since 1972. You can find Cricket working in her garden and caring for all her plants on a regular basis. She became a Master Gardener in 2017. Cricket loves cats and enjoys hiking. She has been a realtor since 1985. She really enjoys being a member of CACSS because of the people in the club and likes to volunteer when there is an opportunity.

Vice President - Chris Ginkel



I have been a member of the CACSS for over 10 years, and I have been trying to help the club in many ways since joining. I hope to continue as a board member to help build upon the success we have had as a society and help guide us to what I see as a bright future.

Secretary - Joanne Johnson

My husband and I moved to Tempe in 1984. We both worked and raised two children. Though we had busy lives, I have been and am currently in the task of the ups and downs of home landscaping. Through the years of trial and error, I have become obsessed with cacti, succulents and desert plants.

I have been a volunteer for VNSA charity book sale since 2002, member of the DBG since 2008, have completed the Master Gardener program in 2015, and been a member of CACSS since 2015.

Since the first meeting, I have felt the positive vibes of this group. Now, I am retired and want to become more involved, so you voted for me as a member-at-large last year. I haven't done much during the COVID era. To become more involved, I hope to be secretary for CACSS.

Treasurer - Nick Diomede



Originally joining the board of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society (CACSS) in 2013, I assumed the position of treasurer in October 2014. I held that position through December 2018, returning to it in January 2021. I presently serve on the board as treasurer.

From 2015 until 2019, I served as vendor chair for the CACSS Annual Show and Sale. In this role, I assumed all responsibilities relating to the sale portion of our events. In 2023, I will be the Show and Sale event chair. During this period, I have assisted with coordinating the October Mega Auctions, assisted various committee chairs where I could, assisted with the CSSA 2017 Convention in Tempe, Arizona, and presently chair the 2023 Annual Show and Sale event.

Member-at-large - David Hemmig

After a short hospital stay when I was nine or ten years old, my mother gave me a plant. It was probably some sort of mammillaria. The identification tag referred to the plant as “The ‘Lil Red Head.” The plant had red spines. At some point, the plant went to “Show and Tell” at school. It followed me to college, marriage and many moves, including cross-country. At one point, it fell from a two-story window into a thick taxus. It was knocked off the back steps by the dog. I had the little cactus until just a couple of years ago, well after I retired! Through constant neglect and probably no fertilizer, that tough little cactus survived. I guess I can say, with honesty, that I’ve had a life-long association with cactus and now, having lived in Arizona for 10 years and with the help of CACSS, my love and appreciation for desert-dwelling plants has flourished.

Member-at-large - Debbi Bertolet

Debbi Bertolet has been playing and working with desert plants for 25 years. She completed DBG’s Desert Landscaping School in 2000, volunteered 1,800 hours with DBG’s horticulture department over the last ten years and joined CACSS in 2015. Upon retiring from Mesa Public Schools as a high school teacher and service-learning director in 2011, Debbi started a business, Organized Inside and Out, which involved residential organizing and landscaping. Deb and her trailer have been all over the county hauling plants and trash! In addition to volunteering with DBG, Debbi served as treasurer and librarian for Arizona’s professional group for organizers, and during her teacher life, led crews of teens in numerous volunteer yard clean-ups and other volunteer activities. She would love to donate her services to CACSS.

Member-at-large - Elaine Hu

Arizona based photographer and ceramicist Elaine Hu discovered the world of cacti and succulents back in 2013 and has been an avid collector ever since. She joined the CACSS community in 2019, and in the same year received her very first award for Best Novice Succulent at our club’s Annual Show and Sale.

With a degree in Interior Design from Arizona State University, Elaine always has innate fascinations towards architectural structure and photography. Ever since she was captivated by the structural forms of cacti and succulents, her photography interest in these plants grew tremendously. Her plant photography captures a sense of tranquil softness that contrasts the prickly nature of desert flora.

Elaine's captivation with succulents has also led her to immerse herself in the world of ceramics. For the past few years, she has been honing her skills in ceramics. With her plant collection acting as her muse, her creations express a contemporary simplistic yet bold style.

This year Elaine took on the role of guest speaker chair, in hopes of gathering speakers that would bring diversity and new interest to our club. Now she is a candidate for the board. She aims to contribute her productivity, resources and creative skills.

Member-at-large - Emily Adler

Emily is an Arizona native who has been a member of CACSS for three years. She earned a doctorate in genetic, molecular and cellular biology in southern California where she enjoyed the opportunity to grow a succulent garden of plants that emphatically object to the Sonoran heat. She enjoys pottery, and she has donated some planters to the club. Her current favorite plant is an *Avonia buderiana* she purchased at the Cactus and Succulent Society of America show in 2022 from Woody Minnich. Emily looks forward to the opportunity to contribute as a board member.

Member-at-large - Kathy Metzger



While I have worked in public health and the arts as a grant writer for over 20 years, my passion for gardening began as a child. Having moved to Arizona from Virginia in the late 70's, I love to learn about and appreciate the incredible diversity of the Southwest and the cacti and succulents that inhabit our region. I look forward to participating in CACSS which I know will provide many educational opportunities, such as trying to learn scientific names, plant identification, proper care, and spending time with other passionate cactus people. My goal after retirement is to become a Master Gardener and continue to share the joy of growing cactus and succulents with others.

Member-at-large - Mary Miller

I was raised on a Wisconsin dairy farm and at an early age learned gardening and respect for Mother Earth. I was a florist for several years. My husband David and I moved to Tempe in 1985 from the western slope of Colorado. I was immediately fascinated by the vegetation of the Sonoran Desert, and it became an obsession. My plant choices are *Stapelias* and *Sansevierias*. Inside, I grow African violets and Christmas cactus. I make a feeble attempt at growing orchids.

All candidates were invited to submit a photo.

This month the featured post was one by our very own Tristan Davis. The thing I like about our PEG meeting leader is how informative and educational his posts on Facebook are. He always answers questions, and he takes great photos. Plus, his collection of cactus and succulents are out of this world. On November 18, Tristan posted some wonderful photos of a rare Brazilian cactus called *Siccobaccatus (Micranthocereus) dolichospermaticus*. (The name alone almost caused me to pick another post to write about!) In his post, Tristan documented the progression and appearance of a cephalium forming on the plant and the development of the flower growing in the cephalium. The complete transformation took over seven months! Each photo in the sequence was labeled with dates, times and an explanation of what was happening in each photo. Such a beautiful plant and very thoughtful post by Tristan Davis.

Each month a photo a cactus and succulent posted by CentralArizonaCactus members is selected for recognition.



Left, Cactus of the Month: *Echinocereus x roetteri* posted November 25 by Jeff Thompson. Right, Succulent of the Month: *Aloidendron dichotomum* posted November 23 by Steve Plath.

CACSS OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022

Officers: President **Cricket Peterson** | Vice President **Chris Ginkel** | Secretary **Joanne Johnson** | Treasurer **Nick Diomede**

Members-at Large: **Pat Adler** | **Kim Andrews** | **Don Begley** | **Steve Gilbert** | **Emily Glenn** | **Celeste Gornick** | **Barbara Macnider** | **Joan McDonnell** | **Mary Miller** | **Lois Schneberger**

CACSS PROGRAM AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS 2022

Annual Show/Sale Chair 2022: open

Archivist/Historian: Lois Schneberger

Audit Committee: Mike Gallagher

Central Arizona Cactus Swap and Shop Page: Chris Ginkel

CSSA Representative: Mike Gallagher

Facebook Coordinators: Tom Briggs, Chris Ginkel, Celeste Gornick, Ken Luiten, Thom Young

Holiday Party 2022: Sue Glenn

Librarian: Diana Rogers

Keeping in Touch with Members: Jo Davis

Membership: Beth Kirkpatrick

Newsletter: Sue Hakala

2022 Auction Chairs: Nick Diomede, Chris Ginkel

Private Plant Sales at meetings: Sue Tyrrel

Programs and Room Setup: Elaine Hu

Propagation Education Group (PEG): Tristan Davis

Pumice Sales: Tom Briggs

Website: Anna Rosa Lampis

SPECIALISTS TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

Tom Briggs

Manages the pumice pile.

Tristan Davis

Specializations include plant propagation, and heading PEG (Propagation Education Group), and manages the Seed Depot.

Doug Dawson

Specializations include growing from seed, flora of Namibia, *Lithops*, other *Mesembs*, *Melocactus*, and miniature cacti and succulents of Arizona.

Chris Ginkel

Co-manages the Facebook page along with Tom Briggs, Celeste Gornick, Ken Luiten and Thom Young, and manages CACSS Swap and Shop page.

Anna Rosa Lampis manages the website.

Ken Luiten

Manages the Instagram page.

Dean Patrick

Specializations in softwood stem-cuttings, plant division and seed starting, rooting cacti, *Agave* and *Aloe*.

Diana Rogers and Nancy Mumpton

Co-librarians for CACSS collection.

Bob Torrest

Specializations include desert landscaping, unusual (including rare fruit) trees and shrubs, *Aloes*, *Agaves*, and columnar cacti.

Sue Tyrrel

Manages selling at meetings.

Send comments, suggestions
and submissions to Editor Sue
Hakala at
cacsscentralspine@gmail.com
